

I support media diversity

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules.

In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question, and, in fact, act responsibly towards the American public by acting to reverse the many years of consolidation of the airwaves that has already occurred. Even the current rules, weak as they are, still serve, to a small degree, the public interest, by somewhat modestly limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

The sweatheart studies commissioned by the FCC in no way accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. It is difficult not to suspect that the declared end result has been manipulated to serve a desired and pre-determined end. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited. The proposed rules will only increase the blandness and ignorance of the proposed audience.

Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be all but eliminated. Whose good does this serve? Certainly not the so-called owners of the airwaves, who will not have more ideas, but substantially less. Not the United States. Not democracy or fairplay. Only the rich owners of the licensed broadcasting will benefit, and they have too much already. It is wrong. What's more, I think you know it is wrong.

The public interest will best be served by preserving the few media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition, why is the official hearing on this matter only in Richmond, VA? That too is wrong. The FCC should be holding additional hearings elsewhere around the nation. It should solicit the widest possible participation from a public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. Why is that not the process, as it has always been in the past?

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Thank you for your time.

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